

Running for office should not be a privilege for the wealthy and well connected. By ensuring that candidates running for federal office can pay themselves a living wage for the duration of their campaign, we will open up countless doors for low income people, women, and people of color. I urge the FEC to approve this petition.

Comments provided by:
Rowen, Sarah

I would oppose the idea of changing the date in which a candidate can begin to accept a salary before the filing deadline, and oppose the idea of giving a set hourly wage, or an amount greater than the candidate's current salary. In the first case, a candidate could claim they are running for office for a few months, collect a salary, and never file a nominating petition. In the second case, people could exploit the new provision to become "professional candidates" who run for office with no intention of winning an election, but merely running to get paid.

Comments provided by:
Monk, William

This rule change is a win. I think, frankly, that it could go further by amending the rule to where \$15/hr is the floor, period. In cases like mine, my last year AGI is less than \$15/hr. It would be rough trying to survive on what I made last year. Candidates should be paid a living wage should they find the funds to draw one from. In the grand scheme, it's a great way to level a millionaire down to \$174,000/yr, but at the same time, they likely wouldn't draw a salary in the first place. This regulation should change to help empower the ability for the middle class and lower class to have access to running for office... This would be a great way to remove that barrier.

Comments provided by:
Swanson, Michael

I believe candidates should be able to use campaign funds for personal use within reason of course and it should be limited to 75% of the salary of the position a candidate is seeking. A lot of Americans MUST work 12hr shifts 5 days a week just to support our families!! That leaves little room to campaign and the amount of money lost by campaigning (As we saw it even impacts the highest office after President Biden's tax returns were released. It's hard enough as it is to even miss a day of work when you are sick, or when your child is sick. It also has a huge impact on single parents who want to run, but who have the issue of childcare which is more than just someone watching your child while you campaign, it includes food, clothing, and healthcare. Lastly, I would like to mention we are still in a global pandemic and speaking as both a candidate, as well as a father to a child who is going through leukemia the options of "safe" work that can still support my family is very limited in someone's situation like my own. In conclusion opening campaign funds for personal use for reasonable causes is not harmful. It will enable more individuals to run.

Comments provided by:
Palimeno, Joseph

Wow ya I would like to register for the white division,for American culture,I'm running for president in the white division 3rd division not red not blue or purple sea the white division the white house and I'm running on a cult American culture Ijfa to UPHOLD liberty

justice and freedom AMEN yes how to register, for we haven't had a real president since ABRAHAM Lincoln ,I'm a union leader of the free world AMEN I want to restore the USA CONSTITUTION, for I'm worthy to UPHOLD liberty so all under me will have to bear me and my hammer of thur who ever is worthy to UPHOLD liberty, the country is unjust because no leader UPHOLD liberty or the USA CONSTITUTION, gee no wonder a harlet in purple scarlet, but my bride well have her white garments and all will know justice christ AMEN separated the purple sea u are all guests in liberty correct my guests to my wedding, then act like it!christ is the head ,for it's my blood, spirit and tears, dont u dear defile my white garments with ur purple scarlet white house is white division not rep blue or Democrats red nor purple in bipartisan, so I run for the white division for cult ya American culture,

Comments provided by:
Whited, Christopher

Due to Ransomware money possibly funding a candidate, how can you pass more laws to investigate IRS tax reports, income and contributions of a candidate?

Comments provided by:
Moran, James

I whole heartedly support this rule change. Giving candidates an avenue for spending more time campaigning and fundraising will be a huge step toward equity by helping level the playing field for the common scenario of newer candidates that struggle with fundraising and getting their campaign operation off the ground. I encourage the FEC to support these proposed changes.

Comments provided by:
Culver, Jon

The requested modifications to the regulations permitting candidate salary are a good start in eliminating disparities caused by operation of state election laws. To the extent that salary is an allowable candidate expense, every individual considering whether to utilize donated funds to cover personal expenses should find themselves similarly situated wherever they may reside. The costs of healthcare coverage continue to rise and are increasingly borne by employers rather than individuals. The public interest is gravely disserved by creating or perpetuating any economic impediment to service-driven individuals seeking and being elected to public office, and the Commission should adopt the proposed expansion of allowable expenses to include healthcare costs if the matter is not moot at final consideration.

However, even the current regulations do not protect the public from a self-interested individual declaring candidacy for office, raising money, and diverting donated funds as salary. The Commission should only adopt modifications to candidate salary rules if conspicuous notice in plain language is provided to all potential donors, particularly when soliciting and receiving donations through online payment processing portals, that donated funds may be utilized for a candidate's salary. Though it is not new that this use is permitted, it is well outside the expectation of the average donor and candidates choosing to utilize funds in such a way must be transparent about that choice.

Comments provided by:
Lynch, David

I am opposed to this petition on candidate salaries. First, candidates and campaign staff are very likely to have other forms of compensation already in place. The proposed salary changes would turbocharge compensation and enhance the likelihood that campaign funds could be used as slush funds and sources of corruption.

Second, using campaign funds to provide healthcare funding is likewise unnecessary because of again the aforementioned likelihood of existing compensation and associated benefits including health insurance coverage for candidates especially incumbents and campaign staff.

Finally, given that the federal minimum wage is only \$7.25 per hour, establishing a campaign salary minimum way of \$15 per hour is egregiously unfair and immoral under the current federal minimum wage.

Comments provided by:
Prayer, Thornton

I am a US citizen that believes that candidates for federal office, should not receive a salary while running for office, and therefore, 100% against this petition. The constitution is being ignored. The founding fathers wrote that public service should never be treated as a money making career. Instead, citizens running for any elected office should serve one term and then return to their regular occupation.

I hope the people will stand up and reject this petition.

Thank you, and please do not share my personal information

Comments provided by:
Poe, Steven

So what you are saying is that someone who VOLUNTEERS to run for office should get a MINIMUM SALARY of \$15 an hour that congress REFUSES to do for the American People you all are supposed to represent? Even better, because of RISING healthcare costs, you should get that paid for too? Let me ask this, if you are an incumbent, do you get paid twice? I mean legally.

The fact that you all have the audacity to ask for a MINIMUM WAGE OF \$15 when Congress won't do it for their constituents (which, God knows, not one of you care about a single person in the area you are running)

Whoever asked for this is a disgrace. If you won't do it for the American People, then you can't do it for you.

So, my solution seems reasonable. You should be allowed to be paid no more than \$7.25 an hour for only 40 hours per week. You can then see if you qualify for Premium credits through Obamacare. Then you can pay (if you can afford it) Then you can apply for SNAP, TANF, Section 8 housing like every other minimum wage earner in this country. Let's see you have to deal with a system you, your friends in congress and your PACS have made for the people who you all couldn't care a second about. I guarantee if this became the rule you all would have a minimum wage of \$15.00 law written and on the floor faster than any help you would give the people.

Also, if you are caught taking more than allowed, you must pay 2x the amount back to the people who donate it, spend 10 years in jail and have a lifetime ban from running for office and VOTING.

You get what you give, candidate. No more. No less. I hope this actually is given some sort of thought when it comes to approving this. This is such a slap in the face to anyone who has read this. Which, I doubt anyone has. I will make sure more people read about it.

Comments provided by:
Townsell, Chris

Does paying a salary and healthcare include elected congressmen or women. If so I disagree as they are already receiving a hefty salary and benefits on the taxpayers dime!

I only support this bill if it is for individuals entering a political race for the first time.

Comments provided by:
Evans, Elizabeth

To everyone:

The FEC is joke. No candidate takes the FEC seriously. If they violate any rules, they just pay a small fine, a slap on the wrist, and continue committing deceptive and illegal campaign practices. If things get really serious, the equally-divided partisan makeup of the FEC ensures nothing gets punished or looked into further. The only thing that really scares candidates is the DOJ, but the violations have to be really serious to get their attention.

This looks like there is some new rule about campaign salaries. I don't know. I don't care. The deal is that the FEC does not even adequately enforce their current rules, so I doubt they could enforce this either. What is the point of commenting? Does anybody actually read this? I read a few before, and let me tell you, the one person who is reading this. The comment above this. It's garbage. The comment below this. Garbage. This comment. Garbage.

Stop wasting your time reading comments (unless it's your job) and go do something fun. Goodbye.

Additional text from commenter submitted as attachment:

garbage

Comments provided by:
Fulop, Marcell

Salaries should not even be talked about. All those people whose lives have been destroyed because OUR GOVERNMENT, destroyed them. It is sickening. Not one single government worker missed a paycheck. And you have the NERVE to discuss YOUR salaries. You should ALL be taking a pay cut. SHAMELESS SCUM

Additional text from commenter submitted as attachment:

No government official or employee, should be discussing salaries. How many lives have been destroyed, how many childhoods have been robbed, how many SUICIDES have happened in this past year? And you discuss SALARIES?????? No one deserves a pay raise, if anything, you deserved to have your pay DECREASED. I've never seen anything like this in my lifetime. SHAMEFUL AND SHAMELESS.

Comments provided by:
Carroll, Cheryl

I hope the FEC will eliminate the restriction that candidates may only pay themselves the amount they made in the previous year. This regulation seems to make it harder for people with lower incomes or stay at home parents to run for office. And the purpose of the current rule is unclear to me. Candidates would have to disclose the expense, so their donors would be aware of the expense at least once a quarter and could then adjust their giving if they did not want to support a candidate who pays themselves too much in their view. I support changing the rule to allow candidates to pay themselves and their health insurance at a reasonable rate as opposed to creating a maximum based on their previous year income.

Comments provided by:
Flanigan, Patrick

I am writing to support the proposals outlined under REG 2021-01 Candidate Salaries. I am an associate professor of public policy and political science at Duke University, but I submit these comments on behalf of myself only. A published summary of my academic research on this topic was cited in footnote 6 (page 2) of the original Petition for Rulemaking to Improve Candidate Salary Rules. I write to respectfully submit my own brief evaluation of the proposed rules and the premise of the original petition. I find both to be consistent with the available academic research on this topic, and I support both in my capacities as a patriotic citizen and a researcher who studies the obstacles to political participation for middle- and working-class Americans. (2) The premise of the original petition states that Running for office is a full time job and is cost prohibitive. Working people are underrepresented in Congress because they cannot afford to run for office. The available academic research suggests that these claims are accurate and generalize beyond the experiences of the petitioner and the other candidates summarized in the petition. In other words, the petitioner's experiences were typical of the obstacles that academic researchers have found routinely prevent qualified middle- and working-class Americans of both political parties from serving their communities as candidates and elected officials. (3) First, the claim in the original petition that Working people are underrepresented in Congress in numerical or descriptive terms is consistent with the available academic research. Elected officials at the federal level tend to be vastly better off than the people they represent on any measure of social class or economic attainment. Accounting for inflation, millionaires have made up a majority of every Congress since the 1980. In contrast, working-class jobs (manual labor jobs, service industry jobs, or clerical jobs) have always made up a majority of the American labor force, but legislators with significant experience in those kinds of jobs have never made up more than 2% of Congress. (4) Second, the claim in the original petition that Working people are underrepresented in Congress _because they cannot afford to run for office_ (emphasis added) is also broadly consistent with the available academic research. As the petition notes, running for federal office is extremely personally burdensome by its very nature, and many qualified would-be candidates are deterred by the prospect of losing income while campaigning. Understandably, these individuals are disproportionately concentrated in the middle and working classes. In a 2014 survey I conducted that asked a nationally representative sample of Americans about the concerns that might prevent them from running for office, the obstacles that most sharply differentiated working-class respondents (those in manual labor, service industry, and clerical jobs) from more affluent professionals were concerns about losing income while campaigning and losing their jobs. (5) The three proposed rules summarized in this announcement seem squarely in line with what scholars know about the obstacles that uniquely discourage middle- and working-class Americans from seeking elected political office. For many qualified would-be candidates of both parties, the personal costs associated with child care, health insurance, and other basic personal expenses are as important to the decision to run for elected political office as the costs associated with yard signs, television ads, and paid staff. (6) I know of no reason to expect the three proposed changes to produce negative side-effects. I believe that these proposed rules will have the intended effects of simply reducing the burdens that uniquely discourage middle- and working-class Americans from serving their communities by running for elected office and ultimately help to promote fairness and opportunity in American elections.

Comments provided by:
Carnes, Nicholas